MARVEL Comics
part 2
The LEGION of NIGHT
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HE WANTS TO MOVE BUT CANNOT MOVE.
WHATEVER IT IS THAT KEPT HIM ALIVE AFTER A 38-STORY FALL HAS ALSO KEPT HIM IMMOBILE FOR THREE LONG NIGHTS.
NOT ME I'M
CHARLES.
NOT ME I'M
CHARLES!

WHUH?
IT'S TIME.
AH DUNH--
THIS WAY.
NOT ME MOVING.
THING INSIDE.
I'M NOT ME I'M
LIKE HIM I'M DEAD LIKE
CHARLES.
FOLLOW.

FOLLOW.
BUH--
FOLLOW!
CHARLES?
NOW!
UHRP?
YES.

THUHR?
YES.
LIDDUH GHURL-- NHOO--
YES.
SHE KNEW.
MA?
NO
CRAZY ... WHAT MADE ME CALL HER...
"HER?"
"ME?"
NOK
CRAZY...
IT'S HIM.
DEAD AND CRAZY...

ST. LOUIS
DOCTOR REYNOLDS? TIME FOR YOUR--
OH, MY. YOU'VE UPSET HER.
I LIKE YOU ALREADY.
OUT ?
WHY? DO I LOOK LIKE I'M NOT HAPPY WHERE I AM?
THEY CLOTHE ME, THEY FEED ME, THEY DRUG ME TO WITHIN AN INCH OF MY SANITY...!
WHY ON EARTH WOULD I WANT TO LEAVE?
OH!
WELL.
SURE.
IF WE'RE TALKING ABOUT SOME-PLACE OTHER THAN EART-

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.

YOU WERE THE ONE--THE MAN WHO WOKE THE GOLDEN DRAGON THIRTY YEARS AGO--?!

YES.

AND NOW YOU *RETURN* --TO UNLEASH THE ABOMINATION UPON US *AGAIN*?!

NO!

FWHOOSH

I CAME TO *KILL* IT, LIEUTENANT-- BUT I DID NOT ARRIVE IN T--

THE TERRIBLE THUNDER OF THE WINGS GROWS FAINT.

FROM BENEATH THE METAL HULK, A TINY MOAN.

THEN THE LAND AND SKY FALL SILENT.

THERE WAS LITTLE HE COULD HAVE DONE. HE KNOWS THAT.
AS A BOY OF 18, DR. CHAN LIUCHOW HAD DESCENDED INTO FIN FANG FOOM'S LAIR, WOKEN THE BEAST WITH A WHIFF OF POTION...
...AND TRICKED IT INTO SCATTERING MAO TSE-TUNG'S ARMY, WHICH HAD BEEN POISED TO INVADE CHAN'S NATIVE TAIWAN.
BUT THAT WAS A DIFFERENT TIME.
THE MOUTH OF THE CAVE HAD BEEN OPEN, FOR ONE THING. CHAN HAD POSSESSED THAT ARROGANCE AND PERCEPTION OF IMMORTALITY PECULIAR TO YOUTH.
AND HE WAS IGNORANT OF THE CREATURE'S ROLE IN THE COSMOLOGY OF THE ATEN DECAN.
NOW, BEFORE HIS EYES, THE WORLD HAS ENDED.
ALL THAT REMAINS IS THE DRAGON'S DREAM.
AND EVEN HIS GROUNDING IN THAT REALITY IS SINKING.

NEW YORK.
WHUH--
WHEH--
WHERE--
--AM I?
THROAT --SO DRY-- BUT--
--VOICE IS BACK--!
OUR HOUSE-- OVER THE BOOKSTORE. ME 'N' GREAT-GRAMPA CLEANED YOU UP.
YOU GOTTA EAT NOW, OKAY?
DYIN' TOOK A LOT OUTTA YOU.
DYING...?
YOU'RE USIN' HIS SHADOW NOW, SAME AS YOU USED YOURS BEFORE.
STILL GOTTA FEED THE BOOY.
AWFUL NAG, AIN'T SHE?
USUALLY KNOWS WHAT'S BEST, THOUGH.
I DON'T-- I JUST-- WANT TO GO HOME--
DON'T LET HIM RUSH YOU. WE STILL GOT LOTSA TIME.

IT'S BEEN YEARS SINCE I'VE USED MY SORCERY—EVEN TO TURN ON A LIGHT BULB! WHAT IF I'VE LOST THE TOUCH?

OVER THE ROCKIES

...SENSE OF DUTY... LONGING FOR ADVENTURE..

..OR AM I JUST PLAIN NUTS?

NONSENSE. YOUR INSTINCTS ARE CORRECT, AND YOU KNOW IT

=GASP!=

YOUR ATTEMPTS TO LEAD A "NORMAL LIFE" HAVE BEEN FUTILE, ANYWAY. YOU'RE *DRAWN* TO UNUSUAL PEOPLE AND UNUSUAL PURSUITS.

HOW MANY STUDENTS SWITCH FROM AN M.B.A. TRACK TO A DUAL MAJOR IN *PAINTING* AND INTERPRETIVE *DANCE*?

YOU FOUND THE *TRUTH* OF YOURSELF IN MY *SWAMP*, YOUR *BOND* TO ALL THINGS LIVING--

--FROM THE TINIEST INSECT TO THE GROSSEST DISTORTION OF *HUMANITY*.

NEVER, NEVER *DENY* THAT, JENNIFER.

I WON'T.

YOU'RE RI//////

EEEEEEEE

WHAT *IS* THIS?! I WAKE UP FROM A NIGHTMARE AND EVERYBODY ELSE IS SCREAMING!

CABIN'S BOUNCING LIKE A YUGO-- WHAT--?

GONE...

FLEW PAST WITH ONLY A SLIGHT DETOUR THROUGH MY DREAM...

WHAT HAVE I GOTTEN MYSELF INTO...?

ELSEWHERE

WHAT IS THIS PLACE? HOW DID I GET HERE? AM I STILL ALIVE, OR--?

ALIVE AND KICKING, OR CHAN SO AM I.

WHO-- HOW DID YOU--?!

DOCTOR KATHERINE REYNOLDS, DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY, GATEWAY UNIVERSITY, ST LOUIS

YOU ARE CHAN LIUCHOW OF BERKELEY, AREN'T YOU?

YES-- BUT--

I'M SORRY. I'M BEING OBNOXIOUS, AREN'T I?

I KNOW THINGS

THINGS I NEVER WANTED TO KNOW, NEVER NEEDED TO KNOW, AND TRULY WISH I COULD FORGET.

BEEN THIS WAY SINCE MY NATURAL PSYCHIC ABILITIES WERE CHEMICALLY "ENHANCED"--

--SANS MY CONSENT.

DO YOU, AH, KNOW WHERE WE ARE--OR WHAT WE'RE DOING HERE?

BUT WHAT THE HELL-- THEY DIDN'T ASK MY PERMISSION TO INVADE PANAMA, EITHER! :HAHAHA:

WE'VE BEEN SHANGHAIED BY FATE, DOCTOR.

I'M SUPPOSED TO LEAD YOU TO OUR MUTUAL DESTINATION.

A LITTLE TRAVELIN' MUSIC, SAMMY!

IS THAT-- WHERE WE'RE GOING--?

YUP. BACK TO THE DRAGON'S DREAM AND STRAIGHT ON TO HELL!

YOU THINK?
CHARLES BLACK-WATER?
GO AWAY
CAN'T DO THAT, SIR
WORTH CHECKIN' OUT.
POLICE MATTER YOU'LL HAVE TO COME WITH US.
THE MATTER IS SETTLED.
GO AWAY
RIING!
NICE PLACE YOU GOT HERE, CHARLIE.
BLACK-WATER
MISTER BLACKWATER, YOU DON'T KNOW ME, BUT--
BETTER GET THAT.
I KNOW YOU, Ms CALE COME AT ONCE

DOWNTOWN
THE OFFICES OF CRUEL FATE.
MARTIN?
HMMM? SHANNON?
THAT'S WEIRD I COULD'VE--
MARTIN!
GAH!
BE SILENT
BE CALM.
NO MORE WORDS.
LOOK INTO THE LIGHT
DO YOU SEE WHAT YOU MUST DO?
YES-- BUT--
I MEAN --I WRITE ABOUT THIS STUFF, BUT I DON'T--
YEAH, YEAH I'LL GO.
BUT I KNOW I'M GONNA REGRET THIS.

UPTOWN A SHORT TIME LATER

HERE COME THE LAST TWO, CHARLIE--JUST LIKE YOU SAID.

THANK YOU, MR WIGHT

WHERE *ARE* WE? IS THIS--THE WORLD--?

NOT THE ONE YOU LEFT, DR. CHAN

SHORTLY, THE REST OF HUMANITY WILL DISCERN WHAT MOST OF YOU--AND THE CALDER CULT--ALREADY KNOW.

THE WORLD HAS CHANGED

SCIENTISTS WILL DETECT A MINUTE SHIFT IN THE EARTH'S GRAVITATIONAL AND MAGNETIC FIELDS, NOTHING MORE.

RELIGIOUS ZEALOTS WILL PROCLAIM THE COMING OF THE *ENDTIMES*.

MOST WILL SIMPLY SENSE THAT THE WIND, THE GROUND, THE OCEANS AND STREAMS ALL FEEL SOMEHOW... *DIFFERENT*.

THEY WILL ALL BE RIGHT AND THEY WILL ALL BE WRONG.

THIS *IS* THE FIRST NIGHT OF A NEW AND PERILOUS AGE, BUT IT IS NOT THE END.

THERE IS NO END.

LESS THAN A DAY AGO, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD, A BEAST AWOKE--

--AND THE WORLD BECAME ITS *DREAM*.

THE *MASTER* OF THE BEAST CREATED IT FOR THAT PURPOSE, TO DREAM AND THEN *DREAM AWAKE*.

VERY POETIC--LIKE "A THOUSAND POINTS OF LIGHT"--BUT WHAT DOES IT *MEAN*?

IF THE BEAST COMPLETES ITS DREAM AWAKE, ITS MASTER ACHIEVES DOMINION OVER THE *UNSEEN WORLD*.

AND *THIS* ONE, TOO--BY DEFAULT.

YES.

GOT IT.

MAYBE *YOU* DO, BLONDIE!

ALL I KNOW IS, MY WORD PROCESSOR SUDDENLY TOLD ME TO HOP A CAB OVER HERE!

WHAT *IS* THIS BEAST? WHAT'S "DREAM AWAKE" MEAN? HOW DO YOU STOP A DREAM?!

YOUR SHADOW KNOWS--OR YOU WOULDN'TA COME.

THEY WILL TRY TO STOP THE BEAST WITH ARMAMENTS. THEY W LL FAIL THE ATTACK MUST--

WHOOOSH!

EE YIPE!

WHAT IS IT--AN *EARTH-QUAKE*?!

UH-UH HE'S HERE.

ARIANN IS CORRECT. THAT WAS THE BEAST.

WHAT YOU FELT WAS THE RUSH OF ITS WIND FROM ITS FLIGHT. DOCTOR CHAN CAN ATTEST TO ITS FORCE.

THE CREATURE HAS COME FOR *US* BECAUSE ITS *MASTER* KNOWS WE CAN STOP IT.

IT IS THEREFORE IMPERATIVE THAT WE ACT AT ONCE--BEFORE THE BEAST CAN *FIND* US

I SHALL REQUIRE A MOMENT. TO EFFECT THE *SEPARATION.*

MY NAME AND THE NATURE OF MY BEING MATTER LITTLE NOW. THE *DREAM* HAS BEGUN--AND WITH IT, THE *DEVASTATION*

HUMAN *BLOOD* HAS ALREADY BEEN SHED, AND THE WORK OF HUMAN HANDS UNMADE.

AND YET WE EXIST AT THE VERY *FRINGES* OF THE DREAM AS IT PROGRESSES, IT WILL DRAW THE WORLD INTO ITS *CORE* AND THE *MINDS* OF MEN INTO ITS ESSENTIAL *MADNESS.*

WHEN THAT OCCURS, THE DRAGON'S TASK WILL BE FINISHED AND HUMANKIND WILL CONSUMMATE ITS *OWN* DESTRUCTION

TO FORE-STALL THESE EVENTS, YOU MUST *FOLLOW* ME--INTO THE *UNSEEN WORLD* TO THE *PRECONSCIOUS SOUL* OF THE DRAGON AND ITS YET-UNDREAMED HORRORS.

AND THERE WE *MUST KILL* THOSE DREAMS-TO-BE.

WH-WHAT IS IT--?!

NAME'S OMEN.

--MOVING UP BROADWAY FROM TIMES SQUARE, LEAVING A TRAIL OF DEATH IN ITS--

--UHH, THE SOUND OF OUR 'COPTER SEEMS TO HAVE CAUGHT ITS ATTENTION WE'LL GET SOME ALTITUDE AND--

HOOORSSH!

OH, GOD HRSH LIKE ACID SSH EYES CAN'T SST LOOK OUT GZZT HEADED

POOM

BZzZZZIKT:-

KIK

PLEASE STAND BY

YOUR FOLLOWERS ARE WAITING FOR YOU, REEVE.

LET THEM WAIT.

THEY EXPECT YOU TO LEAD THEM TO THE BEAST--TO OFFER THEMSELVES FOR THE CAUSE.

YOU LEAD THEM, IF YOU WANT.

ARE YOU GIVING ME TOTAL POWER OVER THE FELLOWSHIP?

HA.

YOU STILL DON'T GRASP WHAT'S HAPPENED, DO YOU, HILDRETH?

THERE'S NO "POWER" TO BE HAD AT THE HEAD OF THIS BUNCH OF NARCISSISTS AND SOCIOPATHS

ALL THAT ENDED WHEN THE DREAM BEGAN.

NONE OF THIS MATTERS ANYMORE

THE MONEY, THE PROPERTY, CONTROL OVER EVERY ASPECT OF OUR LITTLE CULTISTS' LITTLE LIVES--ALL MEANINGLESS.

THE BEAST COULD DREAM IT --OR US-- AWAY AT ANY MOMENT.

WE BROUGHT THE DREAM AWAKE! HOW CAN WE NOT BE A PART OF IT? IF ANYTHING, OUR POWER IS INCREASED!

WE SHOULD HAVE CONTROL OVER ALL MEN, EVEN THE FORCES OF NATURE--!

NO WE'RE PAWNS SMALL BEINGS IN THE SERVICE OF GREAT ONES

TO YOU.

WHAT WE WERE TO ORDINARY MEN, THE BEAST AND ITS MASTER ARE TO US

PERHAPS YOU ARE A CREATURE OF THE OLD REALITY, BUT I AM NOT
I HAVE CHANGED, IN THE SAME WAY THE WORLD HAS CHANGED.
I COULD BE YOUR SUCCESSOR --IF I CHOSE-- BUT I THINK I'M MEANT FOR MORE THAN THAT.
MUCH MORE.
HOWEVER, REEVE DEAR, YOU WERE CORRECT IN ONE RESPECT.
SHE'S ALONE
WHERE'S CALDER?
SOME-THING'S WRONG! LOOK AT HER EYES
I OWE THESE PEOPLE NOTHING. I AM AS FAR BEYOND THEM AS I AM BEYOND YOU.
AND YOU, REEVE, ARE USELESS
YOUR IMPORTANCE WAS ALWAYS SECONDARY. I CAN SEE THAT NOW

THE SHRINKS THOUGHT THEY WERE H-BOMB DREAMS.
NOW I KNOW THEY WERE VISIONS.
I AM--I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN--THE MISTRESS OF THE BEAST.
THE MATE OF THAT WHICH CANNOT BE CONQUERED AND WHICH NO ONE CAN ESCAPE
DEATH ITSELF.
AAN TAANU--DEVOUR ME!
THE ENTIRE PURPOSE OF YOUR EXISTENCE WAS NO MORE THAN TO LEAD ME OUT OF THE OLD WORLD..
..TO CLEAR MY PATH INTO THE DREAM AND BRING ME TO THIS MOMENT OF REALIZATION.
I KNOW WHAT MY ROLE IS--AND WHAT I MUST DO TO FULFILL IT.
EVEN IN CHILDHOOD, I HAD FANTASIES AND DREW PICTURES IN CRAYON OF A WORLD BARREN AND IN FLAMES, LITTERED WITH CORPSES--
--AND OF MYSELF WRITHING ON THE SCORCHED, NAKED EARTH, LOCKED IN THE EMBRACE OF THE KILLING FORCE.

I AM YOURS!
YES!
YES!
TAKE ME!
CONSUME ME!
HERE-- IN THE DREAM.
NEAR YOU,
WITH YOU.
HRRGGH
YES.
YOURS.

YOU DRESSED YET? HE SAYS IT'S TIME
ALL SET
YOU'RE NOT THE LEAST BIT FRIGHTENED BY ALL THIS, ARE YOU?
WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE, I WOULD'VE BEEN TERRIFIED --
BUT I DIDN'T HAVE YOUR SMARTS.
YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THIS STUFF IS VERY ADVANCED, ARIANN
CAN'T HELP IT IT'S JUST WHAT THE SHADOWS TELL ME
BE WARNED MUCH OF WHAT YOU ARE ABOUT TO SEE WILL SICKEN AND APPALL YOU.
IT IS MEANT TO AND IF YOU SUCCUMB TO OR ATTEMPT TO DENY THE HORROR-- THE BEAST WILL HAVE WON
THEY GET IT, PRETTY MUCH
YOU BE CAREFUL, ARIANN!
YOU MAY KNOW MORE'N I DO--BUT YOU STILL KNOW LESS THAN YOU THINK!
HURRM!
YES!
I SAW IT, TOO!
THROUGH YOUR EYES!
IS THIS THE ONE YOU SEEK --THE ONE YOU MUST KILL?
GONNA BE A LONG WAIT
SURE WISH YOU COULD PLAY CRIBBAGE...!
KREG!

WE ARE NOW DEEP WITHIN THE DREAM. WHAT YOU SEE IS THE VISION PLANTED IN THE MIND OF THE BEAST BY ITS MASTER

A WORLD FOUNDED UPON AN AESTHETIC OF UNREMITTING MADNESS AND TORMENT.

THIS IS HUMANITY BEREFT OF INTELLECT, PUSHED BEYOND ANY CONSTRAINT ORDINARILY IMPOSED BY CONSCIENCE OR FEAR OF PAIN

ALL THESE HORRORS AND PERVERSIONS HAVE THEIR ROOTS IN *HUMANITY'S OWN NATURE*

THE MASTER OF THE BEAST NEED NOT *INSTILL* THEM. WHAT HE MUST DO IS *BATTER* THE WORLD PAST THE BRINK OF SANITY --AND *RELEASE* THEM.

NOW WE MUST GO FARTHER, TO THE VERY HEART OF THE DREAM--
--AND DAMAGE IT, WARP THE VISION BEYOND REPAIR
OH, REALLY...?
WHAT IF -HRREG!- OUR STOMACHS-- WARP OUT FIRST--?
YES. HELP HIM.
MARTIN
MARTIN, BE QUIET, OKAY? NOT JUST YOUR VOICE-- INSIDE, TOO
-RRENG!- RIGHT LOOK K.O. I CAN T--
CAN, TOO-- IF YOU STOP SCREAMIN' INSIDE.
FIND THE QUIET AN' YOU'LL FIND YOUR SHADOW. IT'LL TELL YOU WHAT TO DO
YOUR HAND-- WHEN YOU--
SHH
YEAH.
I HEAR IT.
WHUD
OKAY
SORT OF

YOU MUST ALL HEED WHAT YOUR SHADOWS TELL YOU
THE DREAM CAN ACT UPON US, AS WELL AS WE UPON IT.
IT IS NOT A FICTION, BUT A REALITY IN THE PROCESS OF BECOMING.
LIKE HOME. RIP AND GOUGE OR BE SAME. FIGURES
THAT IS PART OF THE TRUTH.
THERE IS MORE.

WE ARE ALSO PART OF THE BECOMING AND, AS SUCH, CAN AFFECT ITS SHAPE AND FORM
THAT IS HOW I WAS ABLE TO "DREAM" YOU AWAY FROM THE FRAY
SOME-ONE COULD'VE BEEN KILLED! WHY DID YOU WAIT--?!
TO PREPARE YOU FOR WHAT IS TO COME.
WHAT YOU HAVE THUS FAR CONFRONTED IS THE LEAST VIRULENT OF THE MADNESS
YOU ARE READY NOW TO SEE MORE.
FOLLOW.
THEY JUMPED --ALL OF THEM--!
I'M HERE
CAN YOU-- HOW DO I --?
I FEEL LIKE A JERK SAYING THIS TO A--WHAT ARE YOU?--SIX YEARS OLD?--
--BUT I DON'T--I MEAN, I CAN'T ACCEPT THIS--MY MIND WON T--!
I'M JUST A WRITER! MAYBE THE REST OF YOU ARE EQUIPPED...
...TO DEAL WITH A WORLD GONE OOGA-BOOGA, BUT I'M NOT.
SHH
DON'T SHUSH M-- WHA--?!
WHAT D O YOU DO?! HOW --?
WHERE ARE WE?!?
WORST PART OF THE DREAM
IT'S WHERE YOUR SHADOW WANTED TO GO

BENEATH US--THROUGH THE MIST--LIES THE BEAST'S PRE-CONSCIOUS
TRUST NOTHING YOU SEE, NOTHING YOU HEAR--ONLY THE VOICE OF YOUR SHADOW
WELCOME, TRAVELERS!
I AM FONG LEE SUN.
MINE WAS THE FIRST HUMAN FLESH TO DELIGHT THE TONGUE OF FIN FANG FOOM...
..AND MY MEMORY HAS DWELT HERE EVER SINCE
FOR UNTOLD CENTURIES, I HAVE MEDITATED UPON MY LAST DAY ON EARTH...
...UPON THE FACES OF MY LIFELONG FRIENDS, MY HONORED WIFE, MY BELOVED CHILDREN
ALL OF WHOM FLED FROM THE BEAST IN TERROR AND ALLOWED HIM TO CONSUME ME.

FIN FANG FOOM HAS MEDITATED UPON THESE THINGS, TOO, FOR HE OFTEN BECOMES THAT WHICH HE DEVOURS.
THIS HAS LED US BOTH TO CERTAIN PHILOSOPHICAL FORMULATIONS ABOUT THE WORLD OF MEN AND THE THINGS THEY PRIZE.
HE HAS ALLOWED ME TO BESTOW UPON THESE NOTIONS AN APPROPRIATE FORM.
I CALL IT "THE HATE WHICH LAUGHS AND WIGGLES."
NO, NO, NO.
-:gth:-
THIS IS THE SHAPE YOU HAVE CHOSEN--TO REMEMBER THOSE WITH WHOM YOU SHARED YOUR LIFE?

THIS IS THE SHAPE INTO WHICH THE WORLD MOLDED ITSELF.
"WHAT I LEARNED, FINALLY, FROM MY LAST DAY OF LIFE WAS THAT THE WORLD IS AN EVIL, SELFISH PLACE
"EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING IN IT WISHES EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING ELSE DEAD.
"IN THE END, IT MATTERS LITTLE THAT I WAS SWALLOWED NEARLY WHOLE BY FIN FANG FOOM
"THE ONLY OTHER CHOICE--THE FATE THE WORLD HAS IN STORE FOR ALL WHO ARE BORN INTO IT--WAS TO BE NIBBLED TO DEATH
"THAT IS WHAT THE WORLD DOES TO HERO AND VILLAIN, KING AND PEASANT ALIKE
"IT CONSUMES THEIR SOULS, A MOUTHFUL AT A TIME."
WILL SOMEBODY SHUT HIM UP--?!?

DO NOT ALLOW HIM TO DISTRACT YOU, DR REYNOLDS.

—gih?—

—gih.—

÷GEHH÷

THE DREAM IS MEANT TO DRIVE MEN MAD BY WHATEVER MEANS IT CAN.

TORMENT, REVULSION, RAGE--IT USES ALL OF THESE.

ANYTHING TO UNHINGE YOUR THOUGHTS AND RENDER YOUR MIND SUSCEPTIBLE TO ITS ASSAULT

YOU MAY RELEASE YOUR SPELL, JENNIFER

HOW'D I DO?

WELL ENOUGH YOU ARE ALIVE TO ASK

YOU WERE STATIONED HERE TO GUARD THE PAGODA

WHY?

WHAT IS INSIDE?

NOTHING A HOLE

FULL OF DEAD SOULS

YOU LIE

IT LEADS TO THE CORE OF THE DREAM.

OOPS! MORE TRAVELIN' MUSIC, SAMMY...!

ELSEWHERE

WHAT DID YOU MEAN ABOUT THIS BEING THE WORST PART OF THE DREAM?

HAS TO BE THAT'S WHY YOU DREAMED YOURSELF HERE.

YOU ALWAYS EXPECT THE WORST

BUT I DIDN'T--!

YEAH YOU DID.

YOU MEAN MY "SHADOW"-- OR WHATEVER YOU CALL IT--?

GOD, KID --I'M SORRY I DIDN'T MEAN TO DRAG YOU INTO--

YOU DIDN'T I FOLLOWED, 'CAUSE YOU NEED ME.

UNFORTUNATELY, YOU'RE NOT THE FIRST TO SAY--

=URRPH= GOOD-- LORD--WHAT?-- =EWWRREGH=

DEAD BABIES, AND THEIR MOMS. THEY DIED 'CAUSE HE FORCED THEM--

YEAH

"HE" --THE BEAST?--

--FORCED THEM--TO HAVE HIS-- CHILDREN?!

YEAH. UNION OF MAN AND BEAST. IT'S HOW THE DREAM'S SUPPOSED TO END.

SUPPOSED TO HELP PROBABLY CAN'T DO IT ALONE.

AND WE'RE SUPPOSED TO

YEAH-- RIGHT-- PROBABLY NOT

HOW SILLY OF ME.

DON'T MAKE FUN HE'S GOT A WILLING ONE NOW.

UP THERE

DON'T TALK DON'T MAKE ANY NOISE

HE SEES US, WE'RE DRAGON CHOW

YOU HAVE COME TO ME OF YOUR OWN FREE WILL-- TO BE PART OF MY DREAM AND THE MOTHER OF MAN'S FUTURE?

YES .OH, YES

TAKE ME...MAKE ME THE LOVER OF DEATH AND THE MOTHER OF CHAOS...!

IF YOU'RE EVER GONNA FIND YOUR SHADOW--DO IT NOW

THE OLD MAN WASN'T LYING WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

DOCTOR CHAN ?

"ACCORDING TO THE ANCIENT WRITINGS, FIN FANG FOOM ALWAYS KEPT HIS VICTIMS NEAR TO HIM..

"...SO THAT HE COULD BASK IN THEIR SUFFERING LONG AFTER THEIR DEATHS

"THE FORMS TRAPPED IN STONE AND IN THE LAKE OF FIRE BENEATH US COULD BE THOSE TORMENTED SOULS

IF SO, THIS WOULD BE WHAT YOU CALL THE CENTER OF "THE DREAM."

JENNIFER A BRIDGE.

NO PROBLEM.

JUST OUT OF CURIOSITY, THOUGH...

COULDN'T WE DREAM OURSELVES ACROSS THE LAKE?

NO THESE FLAMES CAN ENTRAP EVEN A DREAM.

AND THE SOUL OF THE DREAMER

SUCH A SOUL SUFFERS AGONIES BEYOND COMPREHENSION

BEYOND REDEMPTION

ITS LONE IMPULSE IS TO LASH OUT, TO DESTROY, TO AVENGE ITS OWN TORTURE

IT CANNOT BE SAVED-- ONLY SPARED FURTHER ANGUISH.

HOLD IT-- WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?

SHE'S PREGNANT ALREADY CAN'T LET HER HAVE THE BABY.

WHAT'S THE RUSH? WE'VE GOT NINE MONTHS!

UH-UH. IN THE DREAM, THE BEAST DECIDES HOW LONG.

OH SO WHAT DO WE--

HOLD ME TIGHT LET OUR SHADOWS TOUCH

AN' WHATEVER I DO, DON'T GET SCARED-- OKAY?

WHAT THE-- YOU DREAMED US-- TO THEIR SIZE?!

OH, GAWD. IS HE GONNA BE MAD

LEMME GO-- NOW!

WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE?

WHAT ARE THEY DOING HERE--?!

THEY THINK THEY ARE THE LEGIONS OF THE NIGHT, MY DEAR.

THEY THINK THEY CAN DISRUPT THE DREAM. THEY HAVEN'T THE POWER

AAAAA

OH, YES, I DO!!

SEE, BEAST?

IT'S DEAD I KILLED YOUR KID.

TO OBLIVION WITH YOU! YOUR SUFFERING IS ENDED!
C'MERE, SWEETIE.
BACK HOME, WE CALL THIS A SOUL KISS.
READ MY LIPS AND MY MIND, HON
HAH! CAN'T TAKE IT, PUNK?
HELL LOOKS GOOD BY COMPARISON, DOESN'T IT?
CAN THESE PATHETIC THINGS REALLY BE HUMAN SOULS?
MAYBE THEY WERE LIVELIER, UH, BEFORE THEY DIED
AND BEFORE THEIR SPIRITS WERE DEADENED BY CENTURIES OF RELENTLESS PAIN.
HE DRAWS A DISTINCTION BETWEEN SOUL AND SPIRIT?
FASCINATING.
DID YOU KNOW I USED TO BE AN INTELLECTUAL, TOO, CHAN--
--BACK WHEN I STILL HAD AN INTELLECT?

YOU HAVE PROFANED THIS CHAMBER OF PASSION, TORN THE FUTURE FROM ITS WOMB.
MY MASTER SPEAKS TO ME. HE DEMANDS YOUR LIFE.
GIVE HIM THIS.
WHAK
HURRENGNG
NEW YORK
SON OF A --!
THEY HURT IT, CHARLIE! IT'S SCREAMIN' LIKE A WOUNDED WILDEBEEST!
THE DREAM
OMEN..
SO YOUNG-- AND ALREADY SO CRUEL YOU CHOSE THE WRONG SIDE, GIRL YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN WITH US.

THE CHILD'S SHADOW CRIES OUT.
SHE IS HERE
IN THE TOWER
WITH MARTIN-- AND THE BEAST-- AND ITS MATE
THIS IS THE CENTER OF THE DREAM
AND ITS END.
HROOOO
OH, MY LOVE.!
WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO US?

THE TOWER IS COLLAPSING ALONG WITH THE DREAM
COME. QUICKLY.
MY LOVE, MY LOVE
ARE WE DYING?
HRRA RNG
I CAN'T
FIND YOU
IN THE BLACK-NESS
TAKE THE PAIN
AWAY
MY LOVE
DIE
WITH ME
SSHH

BLACKWATER'S APARTMENT. SOME TIME LATER
THE WAR FOR MAN'S FATE IS NOT OVER THE BEAST DOES NOT DE SO EASILY, AND WE HAVE THWARTED ITS MASTER.
...ONLY MOMENTARILY.
WE DON'T GET A VICTORY PARADE?

MANKIND HAS ENTERED A PERIOD OF CRISIS, IN WHICH ITS RESILIENCE AND INTELLIGENCE AS A RACE WILL BE TESTED BY THE UNSEEN WORLD.
WE ARE MAN'S SPIRITUAL GUARDIANS THE LEGION OF NIGHT. THE DEFENSE AGAINST THE COMING OF THE DARK TIMES

GOOD GRIEF I HOPE SOMEBODY'S MAKING CONTINGENCY PLANS...!

OH, YES MANY
ONE OF THEM WAS DEFEATED TONIGHT

WORLD IS OVER. OVER AND OVER
AAN TAANU. YOU SNEAKY BASTARD
AHAHAA

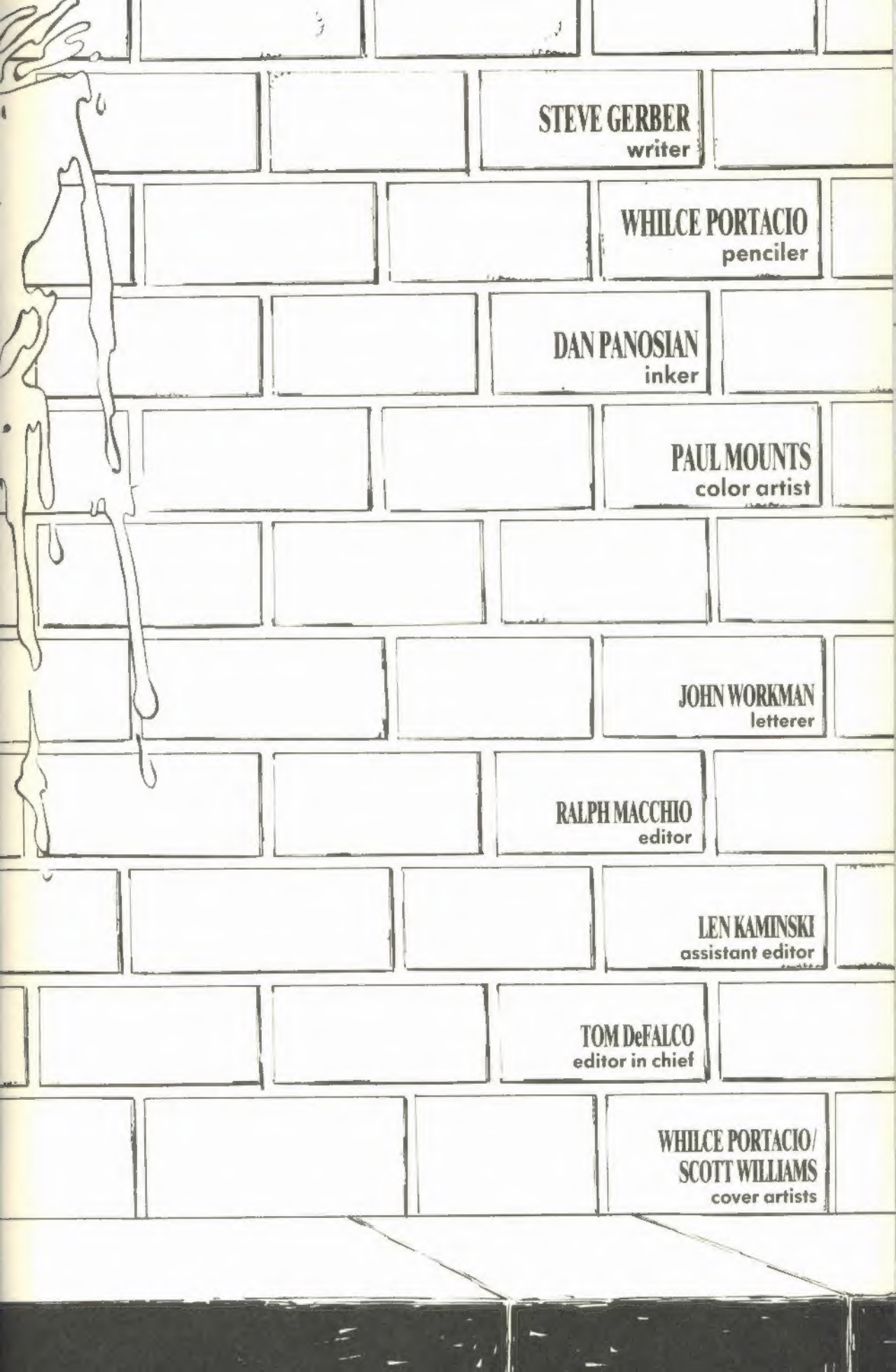
EPILOGUE

At the fringes of Charles Blackwater's consciousness, I wait in silence.

His body is nearly mended. His mind is at ease. He remembers the journey through the dream, but only as observer, as if the story had been told to him by another.

I cannot permit him to see it through my eyes.

He is aware of my presence--aware that we are joined, yet separate--and he is becoming accustomed to the "thing inside."
He believes that I sustain his life. He neither resents nor resists me
That is fortunate, because the master of the beast will not rest for long.
I can be certain of this because the master of the beast once was MY master as well.
As well as any entity, I know his intentions for man and the cosmos.
I know the many forms, hideous and pleasing, which he can assume, and I have witnessed the depths of his depravity.
It is my curse to peer into the hearts of Hell with the eyes of love.
END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